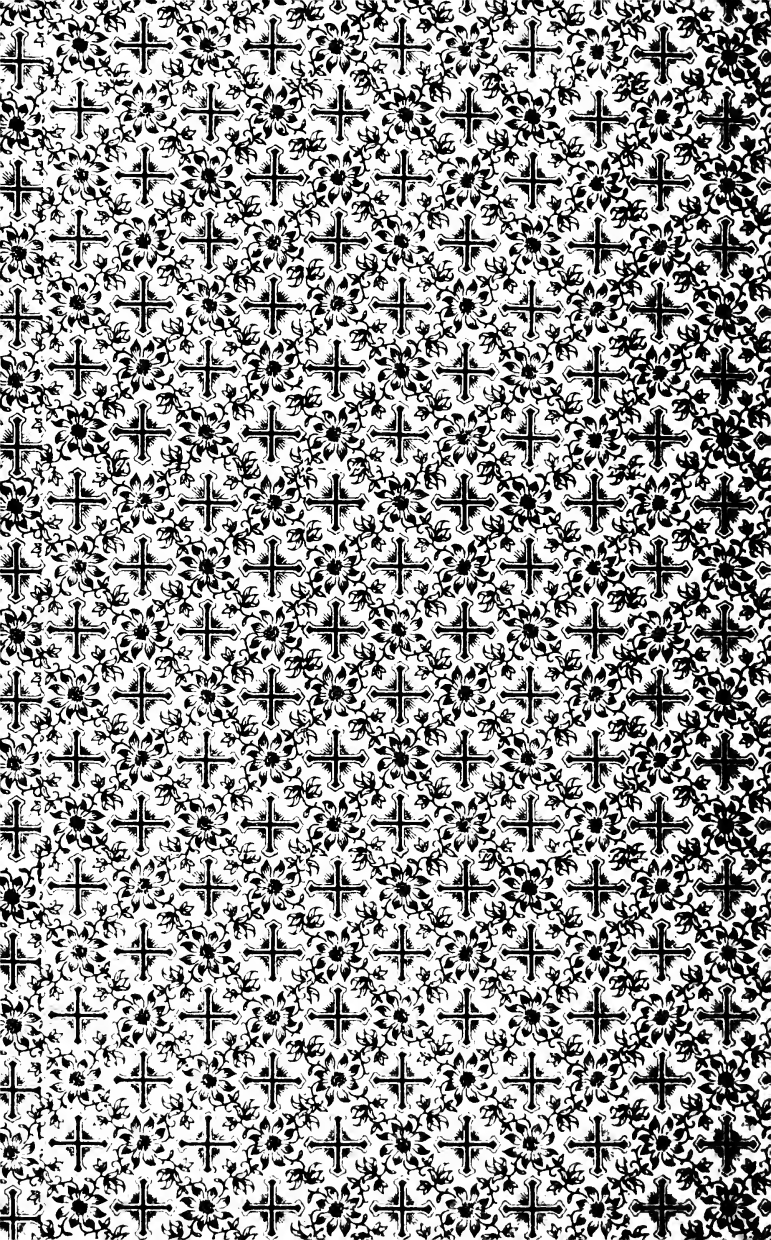
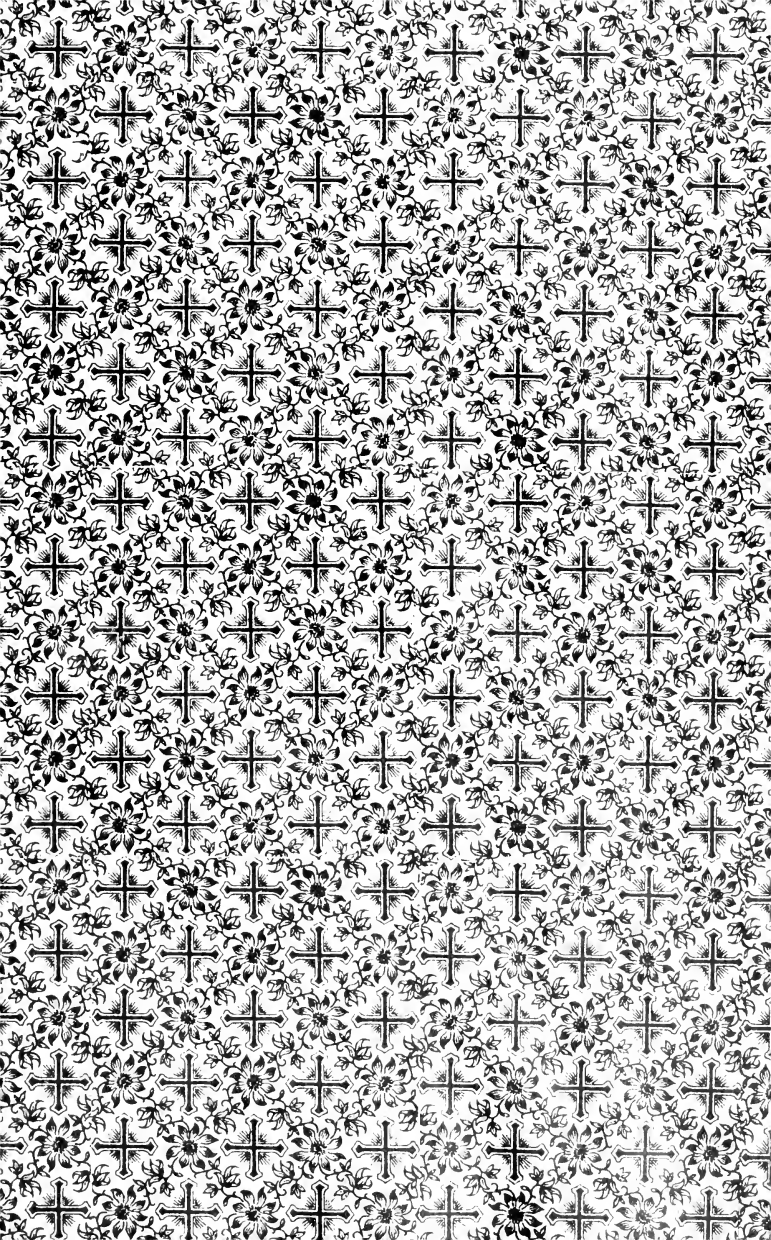


THE APOSTLE
OF
THE SECOND SPRING





THE APOSTLE OF THE SECOND SPRING



John Henry Cardinal Newman

who named and led

the

Second Spring

of the

Church in England



Dominic of the Mother of God,
Passionist

Newman's "Father in God"
and
Apostle of the Second Spring

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The Apostle of the Second Spring

By

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THE PAULIST PRESS
401 WEST 59TH STREET
NEW YORK 19, N. Y.

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Nihil Obstat:

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Imprimatur:

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Archbishop of New York.

New York, July 19, 1945.

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PRINTED AND PUBLISHED IN THE U. S. A.
 BY THE PAULIST PRESS, NEW YORK 19, N. Y.

FOREWORD

THIS year of 1945 marks the centenary of the reception of John Henry Newman into the Catholic Church. With his conversion came the great resurgence of the English Church which Newman himself named the Second Spring. Speaking before Cardinal Wiseman and the English bishops at the First Provincial Synod of Westminster in 1852, Newman cried out:

The past has returned; the dead lives. . . . A restoration in the political world has taken place such as that which happens normally only in the physical. . . . Has the whole course of history a like miracle to show? . . . According to my knowledge I recollect no parallel to it. . . . Thrones are overturned, and are never restored; States live and die, and then are matter only for history. Babylon was great, and Tyre, and Egypt, and Nineve, and shall never be great again. The English Church was, and the English Church was not, and the English Church is once again. This is the portent, worthy of a cry. It is the coming in of a Second Spring.

The apostle of that Second Spring was the priest who received Newman into the Church. He is known as Dominic of the Mother of God, Passionist. It is most opportune now to recount the amazing story of his life.

TABLEAU

JUST a hundred years ago, on October 8, 1845, a short, stout, almost ugly Italian monk huddled in the pelting rain on the outside seat of an English stagecoach as it jounced and rattled along the country roads from Aston in Staffordshire to Oxford. He had been invited to Littlemore, where the great John Henry Newman was living in retirement, after having resigned his living in the Anglican Church. Had he but known of a letter that Newman had penned the day before to his friend Henry Wilberforce, the miserable ride in the cold October rain would have seemed more glamorous than Cinderella's ride to the Prince's Ball. For Newman had written:

My dear H. W. Father Dominic the Passionist is passing this way from Aston in Staffordshire to Belgium, where a Chapter of his Order is to be held at this time. He is to come to Littlemore for the night as the guest of one of us whom he has admitted at Aston. He does not know of my intentions, but I shall ask of him admission into the One True Fold of the Redeemer. . . . He is a simple, quaint man, an Italian. . . . It is an accident, his coming here, and I had no thoughts of applying to him till quite lately, nor should I, I suppose, but for this accident.

An hour before midnight Dominic arrived at Littlemore. He went into the house where he was to make history, and proceeded to dry himself before a blazing hearth-fire. The door opened, and Dominic rose. In a moment Newman was at his feet, praying for admission into the Catholic Church.

Here we have one of the unforgettable scenes of history. Standing before the fire a humble Italian monk whose squeaky voice speaks only broken English, his misfit clothes still dripping rain; and kneeling at his feet the peerless figure whom the English Church had so long venerated, and whose conversion, in the words of Disraeli, was to rock Anglicanism to its foundations.

"Outside," says Oakeley, "the rain come down in torrents, bringing with it the first heavy installment of autumn's sere and yellow leaves that beat against the windowpanes. The wind, like a spent giant, howled forth the expiring notes of its equinoctial fury. The superstitious might have said that the very elements were on the side of Anglicanism, so copiously did they weep, so piteously bemoan the approaching departure of its great representative."

To the world the face of Newman, as he kneels there in the firelight at Littlemore, is etched clearly and forever. But the features of the monk standing by the blazing hearth are indistinct. He appears merely as an incidental detail in the picture. His coming to Littlemore on this historic night seems, as Newman said, "an accident." He is an unknown figure who goes as mysteriously as he comes.

Yet Dominic's wild ride through the storm and his spectacular reception of Newman into the Church were the climax of a drama that had been growing in intensity during thirty years. And the central figure of that drama was not Newman, but Dominic himself. Dominic was neither incidental nor accidental to the tableau at Littlemore. This was the high-point of *his* career, a career which takes rank with some of the most dramatic biographies in all the history of the saints. As we read his story, it is as if our eyes were growing more accustomed to the firelight at Littlemore, and Dominic's features begin to emerge clearly and amazingly as a chosen messenger of God.

Any priest *might* have received Newman into the Church. But Dominic was the one priest in the world who had been prepared during thirty long years of trial to be the apostle of the Second Spring of the English Church. It was only fitting that God should receive from his hands that miraculous springtime's rarest bloom—John Henry Newman.

What drama or even fairy tale can compare with the lives of the saints? Aladdin and Jack the Giant Killer and The

Flying Carpet are tame beside these narratives that are so startling, so unaccountable, so beautiful, from the time of the poor fishermen of Christ, setting out to overcome proud Greece and Rome with nothing but the story of a Baby born in a stable Who grew up to die upon a Cross. Do you want magic and adventure and mystery? They are all here in abundance. Angels open dungeon doors for Peter to make his escape at midnight; Paul is let down from his prison in a basket. Anthony preaches to the attentive fishes; Francis has a conference with the big bad wolf of Gubbio, who agrees thenceforth to become a respectable watchdog. Raymond of Penafort rides the sea upon his magic cloak; Xavier raises the dead to life. Peter Claver kisses the gangrenous sores of negroes in the stinking holds of slave ships; Damien scales mountains to be one with his beloved lepers. Vincent de Paul is captured by pirates, sold into slavery, converts his renegade master, and escapes with him into France; Peter Chantal is martyred on a cannibal island, whereupon all the cannibals become Catholic. Ignatius, the soldier, hangs his sword before the altar of Our Lady, and forms an army whose numbers and exploits eclipse those of the greatest military legions; Francis Borgia, duke, warrior, bullfighter, viceroy, father of eight children, becomes General of the Jesuits. Elizabeth picks red roses in the white snows of winter; little Therese keeps her promise in heaven to scatter roses on the earth. Joan of Arc leads armies into battle; Bernadette meets the loveliest of fairy godmothers.

Where are there such tragedies as those of the saints, and withal such courage? Lawrence jokes as he roasts on his gridiron. Andrew preaches from his Cross. Isaac Jogues runs eagerly to the Mohawks and their tortures.

As for romance, here are men and women lifted off the earth in ecstatic rapture with their tremendous and invisible Lover, transformed into their Beloved so that they bear in their own bodies the wounds of His crucifixion. What

words of human love can compare with the Confessions of Augustine, the Spiritual Cantic of John of the Cross, the dying cry of the Little Flower? What deeds of love can rival the penances and martyrdoms of those who fill up in their flesh what is wanting in the sufferings of their Master?

Magic, mystery, tragedy, comedy, courage, and high romance—they are all to be found, pressed down and running over, in the lives of the saints. They can be found abundantly in the life of Dominic of the Mother of God, Passionist. His whole life is sheer drama. It was planned that way by God. And the prelude was written by Him, too. It began more than seventy years before Dominic was born.

PRELUDE

In midwinter of 1720 an Italian anchoret who called himself Paul of the Cross lived for forty days in a cold cell adjoining the sacristy of the church in Castellazzo. He had a straw sack for a bed, and bread and water for sustenance. During those forty days he wrote a way of life for religious that later became the Rule of the Congregation of the Passion. He tells us that on the Feast of St. Stephen the Protomartyr, when praying before the Blessed Sacrament, he began to reflect on those men who deny the Real Presence of Our Lord in the Eucharist. England especially came to his mind with vivid pleadings to be restored to its former self. From that day until his death, fifty years later, Paul of the Cross never knelt in prayer without petitioning for its conversion. Moreover, he ordained that in every monastery of the Passionists special prayers should be recited daily for England's return to the old Faith. "Ah! England, England," he used to say, "let us pray for England. I cannot help praying for it myself, for whenever I begin to pray, this kingdom presents itself to my mind." Just before his death, after being in an ecstasy, he exclaimed, "What have I seen? My children—my religious in England!"

How can we explain this overpowering desire of Paul of the Cross for the conversion of England? At the time of his retreat in Castellazzo he could not have had any great knowledge of its history nor of its miserable state of heresy. Up to that time he does not seem ever to have met an Englishman, nor did he afterwards seek out English visitors to inform himself concerning the manners or customs of their countrymen.

It is the same sort of mysterious yearning we find so often in the lives of the saints, to work among people they have never seen and about whom they know practically nothing. In France Father Isaac Jogues longs to spend himself among the Mohawks of Canada; Peter Chantal yearns to bring the faith to the savages and cannibals of the Pacific Islands; Theophane Venard wishes to be a martyr among the Tongkinese; Charles Foucauld buries himself in the desert among the Arabs; in Spain Peter Claver is on fire to labor among the negroes of the West Indies; in Belgium Damien looks across the world to Mólakai; and in cloistered convents thousands like the Little Flower sacrifice themselves for those who have never even heard of Christ. How can we understand these supernatural longings of the saints in all the ages of the Church unless we understand that she is the Body of Christ; unless we see living in her the same Master saying to those in whom He lives, "Other sheep I have that are not of this fold. Them also must I bring. And there shall be one fold, and one shepherd."

When we perceive this fact, it does not seem strange to us that an Italian saint should have been inspired to pray especially for England. That country from the beginning had been an Italian mission. From Italy had come Augustine, from a monastery on the Celian Hill in Rome, where Paul of the Cross was one day to have his own monastic home. Augustine had borne in solemn procession on his landing in England that Cross which was to be in a special

way the banner of the Passionists. And, finally, England had always been known as the Dowry of that Mary who had appeared to Paul, clothed in the sort of religious habit he was to wear himself. Yes, there was ample reason why Paul of the Cross should be specially inspired to pray for England and to have the reward of seeing in vision his own religious there.

Yet not long after his death it seemed that his vision had been only a dream. His Passionists were dispersed along with the other Religious Orders of the Church; Pope Pius VI died in exile at Valence, a prisoner of the Revolution; and the Church herself appeared about to perish. "The Pope is dead," wrote the Administrator of the Department of Drome to Paris; "we have seen the last of them."

It was the beginning of that nineteenth century in which, as Peter Wust remarks:

The mind of Europe is secularized; the world stripped of its sacred meaning; the Church ruled out of public affairs; God is dethroned in the soul of man.

Father Corrigan, S.J. writes of the same time:

The Church in France lies helpless under the Revolution; Cardinal Pacca writes to Rome that in Germany the Church can be preserved only by a miracle; Italy is uncertain; the Spanish peninsula seems hopelessly decadent; the dark shadow of Russia rests on Poland; the Church can no longer look to Austria for aid; the American Church is in its infancy; Ireland is under the heel of England; and in England itself the Church is in the Catacombs.

In fine, one hundred and fifty years ago the Church was much more sorely straitened than it is today. Looking back on those days now should brighten for us the gloom of our own times when the Church in Europe is shadowed by the growing darkness of Communism. We can be heartened by the realization that Christ always repeats His life in His

Mystical Body. We can understand that there is always a crucifixion before any resurrection of the Church. Thus the persecutions and martyrdoms of the early Church preceded the Edict of Constantine. The Dark Ages led up to the glorious noontide of the Thirteenth Century. The crucifixion of the Reformation ushered in the Council of Trent and the tremendous missionary triumphs of the Religious Orders. And the apparent death throes of the Church at the beginning of the nineteenth century were only to precede an Easter rising for her all over Europe, particularly in that England which was to witness the miracle of a Second Spring, that England for which Paul of the Cross had prayed so ardently, and for which his children had been praying for more than one hundred years.

It was fitting that an outstanding part in this reawakening of the Church in England should fall to a son of Paul of the Cross. He is known to the world as Dominic of the Mother of God, Passionist.

THE SHEPHERD BOY

Dominic Barberi was born near Viterbo on June 22, 1792, the youngest of six children. His father, Joseph, was a small farmer who died when Dominic was three years old. His mother, Maria Antonia Pacelli, died when he was eight, but Dominic was her favorite child and cherished always a deep love for her. Virtue passes easily from the heart of a good mother to her child, and Maria taught her son a particularly ardent devotion to Our Lady. There has never been a saint in the Catholic Church without this devotion to Mary. As members of the "Body of Christ," how can they have anything but a deep love for her who is at the same time His Mother and their own?

After his mother's death, Dominic went to the home of an uncle. Here he lived as a shepherd boy and peasant farmer. Nobody ever thought of sending him to school,

simply because schooling was considered unnecessary for the life he was to lead. An old priest, however, taught him to read, and the boy devoured every book he could find, particularly the Holy Scriptures. Later on, like his Master, he was to confound the doctors of the Law with his wisdom and his answers.

Dominic's first thought of being a religious came when he saw the Passionist Sign on the habit of a monk exiled from his monastery and living in Viterbo. About this time, too, he began to experience the strange longing we have remarked before in the souls of the saints, to spend himself for unbelievers. Indeed in his boyish fervor he made a vow to become a Passionist, just like another Italian boy after him, known now to the world as St. Gabriel of the Sorrowful Virgin. And, like Gabriel, he was to forget his vow—for a time. After all, his life was well mapped out. His uncle had made him his heir. There was a lovely girl in the neighboring town who wanted to marry him. And so, against the advice of his confessors, he decided to wed. But on the very day set for the ceremony he became violently ill. He remembered his broken vow. He seemed to see a place prepared for him in hell. Then Mary appeared, pleading with God for him. And suddenly he was well again. Only now, as with Gabriel after a similar illness, there was no more hesitation. His mind was made up. And when the Religious Orders were restored in 1813, he entered a Passionist monastery at the age of twenty-one to become a lay-brother. He intended to work in the kitchen and in the fields for the rest of his life. He did not dream of becoming a priest. He had had no education.

THE VISION

But now the great drama of Dominic's life was about to begin. It began with the echoing in the depths of his soul

of that mysterious voice which, the saints have told us, can neither be explained nor misunderstood.

Saul had heard it on his way to Damascus, to persecute the Mystical Body of the Church. "Saul, Saul," it had cried, "why persecutest thou *Me?*" Augustine had heard it counseling him to read the Scriptures, "*Tolle! Lege!*" "Take! Read!" Thomas of Aquin had heard it asking him what he wanted in return for his sublime writings about his Lord, and he had answered, "Naught save Thee." Joan of Arc, Theresa of Avila, Paul of the Cross, and innumerable others had heard it, and through obedience to its commands had become saints. Félicité de Lamennais was to hear it, too, during his first Mass, telling him, "I call upon you to carry My Cross; nothing but the Cross—remember!" But he was to disobey, and so to die with his face pressed to the wall, away from the crucifix upraised in the hand of a friend.

Dominic heard that voice twice, both times while praying before an altar of Our Lady. The first time it told him he was to work for souls in far-off places. The next time it told him he was to labor as a missionary in northwestern Europe, and particularly in England.

How was this to happen, when apparently he was not destined to be a priest? The young lay-brother did not know. But he was absolutely certain that it *would* happen. "I was so convinced of this being a divine command," he writes, "that I would sooner have doubted my existence than its truth and its eventual fulfillment at the hands of His Divine Majesty." To that certainty he clung through twenty-six years of trial and darkness, with one obstacle after another appearing to make impossible the realization of his commission.

Did Dominic, working now as a ploughboy, run to his religious superior, tell him about the vision, and insist that he must become a priest? Not at all. He had already made

a resolution that he was never to break. "I shall do the best I can in whatever position I am placed, and leave the rest to God." So he simply continued to do his best as a lay-brother. God would arrange for his mission career.

One night, after working in the fields, Dominic sat talking with the young men who were preparing to become priests. The Novice Director jokingly asked him a question concerning a passage in the Bible. The Director did not expect an answer. He did not know how often the former shepherd boy had read the Scriptures. So he was amazed when his question was answered brilliantly. He determined to learn more about this uneducated young man, and the more he learned, the more he wondered, for the lad remembered almost everything he had ever read. Finally the Director realized that the lay-brother should be allowed to study for the missions.

Thus once more Dominic was with the books he loved so dearly. He made such good use of them that his teacher soon remarked that he could teach his classmates, himself. During the four years of preparation for the priesthood and the three succeeding years of study he led his class as a student and especially as a religious. Always he was seeking within his soul that Christ Whose voice once heard can never be forgotten. He made one more resolution—that he would never waste a minute in the service of God. That resolve, too, he tried to keep all his life.

ENGLAND, MY BELOVED

At the age of twenty-six Dominic of the Mother of God, Passionist, was ordained to the priesthood in Rome. He lived now on the Celian Hill in the monastery of SS. John and Paul where Paul of the Cross had seen in ecstasy his sons in England. And soon it became evident that the mantle of Paul in his love for England had fallen in double strength upon his disciple. Indeed I doubt if in all the

history of the saints we shall find a more flaming passion for any mission country than Dominic had for his beloved England. I must speak cautiously and according to my knowledge, but I recollect no parallel to it. Whenever he speaks of this land he can talk "only in the broken accents of a lover." And he was continually speaking or writing about it all during his thirty years of missionary life. Over and over in his letters we read such sentiments as these:

O, that I could give my blood and my life for my beloved England. . . . For England's conversion I am willing to be condemned to death, to lose the light of reason, to be deprived of God's sensible aid, and left without the slightest relish for prayer. . . . *I would willingly undergo the pains that the English would suffer if they were eternally lost, that all should return to the bosom of the Church.*

Every day at Mass he offered to the Father the people of England. He pestered others to pray for the English. He had a bloodletting during a serious illness, and was delighted that he was able to offer "pounds of blood" in union with the Precious Blood of Christ for England. England was his "bride by day and his dream by night." Never, I repeat, have I met in the lives of the saints such an overpowering, passionate, flaming love for a country and a people as Dominic had for England and the English. And he had never set foot out of Italy.

Ten years of his priestly life passed by—years filled with prayer and penance and the labors of preaching, teaching, and the direction of students. During all this time there was not the smallest ray of hope that he might some day work in England. Yet for us, who can see his life in retrospect, there was one astonishing portent to show how he was inevitably drawing nearer to his goal.

In 1823 the ill-fated De Lamennais had finished his *Essay on Indifference in Matters of Religion*. It was

greeted on all sides with wild enthusiasm. Its author was hailed as a new Father of the Church. But amid the universal chorus of praise two discordant voices were heard—and two only. One came from the Protestant Vicarage of St. Mary of the Virgin, Oxford; the other came from a Passionist cell in Italy. The two voices were those of John Henry Newman and Dominic of the Mother of God, Passionist. At that time they did not even know of each other's existence.

At the age of thirty-six Dominic was teaching theology in the monastery of SS. John and Paul. Monsignor Wiseman was Rector of a reawakened English College in Rome, and many Englishmen were coming to visit him. Among them were Gladstone and Macaulay, Froude and Ambrose de Lisle Phillips. George Spencer, a convert minister, son of the former First Lord of the English Admiralty, had come to study for the priesthood. Newman came and went without knowing Dominic. But other Englishmen were beginning to remark this strange Italian monk whose heart was aflame with love for their native land. From the beginning Wiseman and many other Englishmen were powerfully drawn toward the Passionists who had been praying so long for their country. Wiseman asked for a Passionist to teach an old convert minister, Sir Harry Trelawney, how to celebrate Mass, and Dominic received the appointment. Neither he nor Trelawney could understand the other's speech, but friendships were formed through the association. Soon Dominic was walking with Spencer and Phillips and other Englishmen in the garden of SS. John and Paul, talking with them in a mixture of French and Italian. He was always to have trouble with the modern languages, excepting his own and Greek. But he was a master of the Latin classics, of ancient and modern Greek, and author of more than fifteen distinguished volumes on philosophy and theology.

All too soon the inspiring walks and talks in the garden on the Celian Hill were abruptly ended. In 1830, when he was thirty-eight, Dominic was chosen to found a new monastery at Lucca, where many years later the virgin St. Gemma Galgani was to bear in her body the wounds of her Crucified Lover.

DISAPPOINTMENT

The change undoubtedly was a wrench for Dominic. It meant no more talks with his English friends for at least three years. But he had one consolation. As a Superior now he could hope for a voice in the Chapters of his Congregation. Thus he might plead for a new foundation in England. Three years later, at the Passionist General Chapter, he did propose such a foundation. But of course God was not disposed to let him win so easily. The proposal was summarily dismissed. Moreover there would be no chance to bring the subject up again until the next General Chapter, six years away. He would then be forty-seven years old.

And here we must remark that while Dominic was always convinced that he would go to England eventually, and ever burned with desire to go, he never asked to be sent there. Once a priest advised him to petition the Pope for permission to work in the country engraven on his heart. He smiled and said, "I am a child of obedience. I go only where I am told to go." God had arranged for his priesthood. God would take care of his commission to England.

So he left Rome again, this time to be a Provincial in southern Italy. And now he wrote, "Ah, England! England! How long, how long!" Spencer returned to Britain as a priest, and Dominic wrote, "He takes my heart with him." But he continued to pray and to beg others to pray for England. He kept up endless correspondence with his English

friends. And he never lost hope that he would go to Britain in the end. Cholera came to Ceprano, and he worked heroically and fearlessly among the plague-stricken Italians. "Death cannot come too close to me," he said. "I must die in England."

Another General Chapter opened in 1839. Another plea for an English foundation was offered, this time by Father Spencer. De Lisle Phillips offered a house. And at last it was decided that the sons of Paul of the Cross would go to England. And Dominic? Poor Dominic was elected again to serve as a Provincial in Italy for another three-year term.

Worse than that, the whole project collapsed suddenly and completely, probably because there were many English Catholics who felt that the Passionists had no place in their country. Thus Lord Shrewsbury wrote to Phillips:

I have seen Lord Clifford and Father Glover and the Passionists. The former agree with me that it is an impracticable scheme to think of working with them in England. . . . Father Glover said, "You will never get an Englishman into that Order, so what good can you do with them?" . . . Father Dominic and another came to see me. They were ready to go and take possession of the house you were so good as to offer them. I said that they could not eat the house, and I did not know who was to feed them otherwise. Father Dominic spoke a little broken English, but did not understand a word I said to him. You will only bring yourself and others into trouble with these good people, and do no good.

What were Dominic's thoughts as he left Rome again to take up his duties as Provincial? Twenty-five years had passed since his "vision." Now at last it must have appeared impossible of realization. Even if an English foundation were eventually accepted, how could he hope to go there? He was almost fifty years old. His new appointment would keep him in Italy for three more years at least.

And already his health was shockingly bad. A serious hernia, rheumatism, and palpitation of the heart were but part of his ailments. His eyesight was so poor that he could distinguish people a few paces away only by the sound of their voices. He had to be continually swathed in bandages, and the least exertion caused him pain from head to foot. Moreover, he was quite unattractive physically, he had a squeaky, rasping voice, and he knew scarcely a word of English.

To settle any doubts about the matter, a message from his General in Rome came to him one day as he was giving a mission. It said that while the Superiors realized that the time had not yet come for the Passionists to enter into England directly, a foundation had been accepted in Belgium, with a view to passing over into Britain later on. Four men had been chosen for the mission. . . . Dominic had not even been mentioned.

We have remarked that there is no drama to compare with the lives of the saints. The melodramas of the stage and screen, with all their nervewracking suspense, are but pale similitudes of the startling and unaccountable adventures of the men and women of God. In our cinemas the hero in a burning cabin is surrounded by hordes of blood-thirsty villains. All apparently is lost. Suddenly a bugle blares. We hear the shouts of men, the galloping of horses. The U. S. Cavalry thunders up, pennants flying. Our hero is saved.

Ah, but in the lives of the saints there are not merely villains who can kill bodies to be considered, but enemies who can destroy souls, adversaries with supernatural intelligence and cunning and hatred. "For our fighting is not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers, against the spirits of wickedness in high places, against the rulers of this world of darkness." There are the allurements

of the world to be overcome; the enticements of the flesh; there is the serpent of self-love entwining itself in the uttermost depths of the soul, the serpent which must be hacked to pieces and torn out piecemeal, still always twining and clinging until seemingly, to disengage it, the soul itself must be uprooted. And, worst of all to the saints, there is the apparent abandonment of them by God to their enemies, so that they seem to walk terrifyingly alone in what they call "The Dark Night of the Soul."

Dominic tells us that for more than thirty years he suffered this tormenting darkness of spirit. And now, with the heart-breaking news from Rome, there was good reason for him to feel utterly abandoned by that God Who had once made him believe that he would some day go to England. Now, if ever, we should expect him to believe that his vision had been a mockery, that his priestly life had been built upon a delusion.

But the saints never do what we expect them to do. When the crushing news came from his General, Dominic turned to a friend and said, "You will see. They will not go without me." The friend must have smiled at him understandingly. All the Passionists had known for years of this "obsession" about his mission to England. Often they must have laughed about it among themselves. "Poor Dominic!" they must have said to each other. And "Poor Dominic!" they must have said with emphasis and finality, that day the word arrived that his hopes had gone forever.

Why did this middle-aged priest, half-blind, and crippled with ailments, still cling to his conviction that he would go to England, in spite of all? Did he "feel" that he would go? The saints don't bother overmuch about feelings. They "will" things. They don't "feel" even faith at times. They "will" it, like St. Vincent de Paul, who had no feeling of faith for many years, and could only will to believe in the Credo that he wore over his heart. I don't believe that

Dominic "felt" he was to go with the chosen men to Britain. But he "willed" to believe it. God had promised that he would go. This was his last chance. He had kept his own promise to do the best he could. God would never fail to do His part.

A REPRIEVE

And suddenly God did His part, unaccountably, astoundingly. Heavenly bugles were already blaring afar off; angelic cavalry were galloping to the rescue. For even while Dominic had been insisting, against all hope, that he would go to England with the little band of chosen men, the appointed leader of the band was begging off from his assignment. All that men knew was that soon a very earthly messenger rode up to Dominic's monastery and gave him a message from his General. It told him simply that he was to go to Rome to act as substitute leader of the mission to Belgium and England. Just so had Xavier been substituted at the last minute for his mission to the Far East. So, too, would Damien of Molokai be supplied for his brother, suddenly stricken ill the night before he was to leave for the islands of the South Pacific.

What did Dominic do when he received his miraculous summons? Did he shout with joy? Did he turn hand-springs, as Don Bosco used to do? Did he call his monks to rejoice with him? Surely, strict as he always was with himself and others, he must have announced a *Gaudeamus* for his community. I doubt, however, that he waited to enjoy it with them. I'm sure it didn't take him long to set off for Rome. He had no clothes to pack. Passionists in Italy wore only the religious habit, as they wear it today. A few necessities he took, perhaps an extra old habit. Then, almost helpless with pain, he was boosted onto the back of a plough-horse to begin his journey to Rome.

I'd like to write about our hero galloping along the road

to the Eternal City, but we read that for part of the way he had to be supported, on either side, because of weakness. I'd like to describe him as a gallant figure dashing off to battle in Britain. In reality he resembled nothing so much as poor Don Quixote setting off on his ancient Rosinante to joust against the windmills. Those against which Dominic was to enter the lists had been turning ponderously and crushingly during three centuries, fanned by the winds of hatred and prejudice, grinding the Catholic Church in England to powder. The modern Don Quixote's lance was to be a crucifix.

Arrived in Rome, Dominic delayed no longer than was necessary. He and his little band, two priests and a lay-brother, went to St. Peter's to be blessed by the Pope. A Gregory had blessed Augustine. Another Gregory blessed the new apostle. This later Gregory had once been a monk too, on the same Celian Hill from which Augustine had come, and now Dominic. He spent his last few moments in Rome in prayer and tears at the tomb of his father, Paul of the Cross. He must have wondered then if he were the one that Paul had seen in vision in England. At last he left Italy. He was never to see it again. It was May the Feast of Our Lady of Victories, 1840. And the General who was sending him on his mission was the old Director of Novices who had asked him the Scripture question when he was a lay-brother, and had petitioned to have him educated for the priesthood.

BELGIUM

Why did God ordain that Dominic should spend more than a year in Belgium, before going to an English foundation? Perhaps to prepare him for the hardships that lay ahead. Even after his trials in Belgium, he was to find his sufferings in England almost unbearable. Without the Belgium preparation, they might have been too much, even for his resolute spirit.

The house to which he came at Ere was little better than the cell of Paul of the Cross at Castellazzo. There were sacks of straw on the ground for beds, the only furniture in the house was a table in the kitchen, and there was not much more than bread and water for sustenance. Worse still, calumnies and hatreds began to be directed against the little band. They were accused of being expelled in disgrace from Italy, and of trying only to make money from the poor Belgians. Finally Brother Crispin, the only lay-brother among the four, became mortally ill. Through it all their leader was serene and happy. "Contradictions and calumnies," he writes, "are the most stable foundations of religious houses." The saints know that God permits the devil to stir up tempests when they are about to do something for His glory. Thus the Founder of the Marist Fathers used to say, when things went particularly badly. "Today we have taken a step forward." This is the humor of the saints which the world doesn't understand, because it is based upon the Wisdom of the Cross that to them is foolishness.

"The Demon," writes Dominic, "has put forth all his strength to ruin us. I do not lose courage on account of that. I recognize all this trouble as a clear sign that our work will succeed. I should fear much more if we were successful in all things at the start and if all went well according to our plans and ideas."

In this wise the Belgium foundation began to grow, even though trials multiplied so rapidly that there was a time when the Superiors in Rome thought of giving it up. But Dominic had come too far along the way to England to retreat now; and at his pleadings the foundation was saved. It has been a great glory to the Passionists ever since.

As always, Dominic was keeping to his resolution of not wasting a minute of time in the service of God. He was running the house, looking about already for new foundations, keeping the strict Passionist observance, even to mid-

night Matins, and giving unforgettable retreats to seminarians, priests and religious. During his first days in Belgium, according to custom, he was summoned by the Vicar-General of the Diocese to be examined for faculties. Before the examination had gone far, the Vicar-General closed his books and said: "This priest should be examining us."

In the midst of all his work and prayer, of course his heart was always in Britain, and he kept up a steady flow of correspondence with his English friends. Wiseman, now a bishop, came to Oscott College in September. Before having been made a bishop in Rome, he had made a retreat at SS. John and Paul, during which he had made a vow to bring the Passionists to England and to his diocese. Dominic tells us that Wiseman, on several occasions, confided to him that his secret desire was to be a Passionist, himself. Wiseman had not yet received a diocese, but he had already picked out a house for the sons of Paul of the Cross. He wrote to his old friend in Belgium, offering him a place at Aston in Staffordshire.

Dominic, half-paralyzed with joy, rushed off a letter to the General in Rome, and was told to make a visit to England. When he reached the coast at Boulogne, he could not wait to see the Promised Land. He climbed to the top of a church to view the English coastline. . . . And on the way across the Channel, he prayed to God to let him be drowned, if it might help in any way toward the conversion of the English.

A CHARGE AND A RETREAT

It is dangerous to try to ascribe human characteristics to God. But it would seem that He has as an infinite perfection, something corresponding to our sense of humor. Otherwise, how could He have created myriads of things that appear so comical to us—puppies and kittens, penguins and por-

cupines, huge elephants and the tiny mice that terrify them, cows that make milk from grass, pigs that transform refuse into pork-chops? And, after all, aren't we funny enough, ourselves?

The life of Our Divine Lord is filled with paradox, from the wise kings adoring Him in the stable, to the good thief worshipping Him on the Cross. And in its narrating there lies many a hidden chuckle, from the story of the woman of Canaan, to the episodes following the Resurrection.

There is many a chuckle to be found in the life of Dominic, too. Theresa of Avila once complained to Our Lord that the reason He had so few intimates was that He treated them too roughly. Dominic might have made the same complaint more than once. For more than twenty-six years the poor man had burned with desire to enter England. When God finally arranged for him to enter, it was the one day of the year when, naturally speaking, he should have stayed away. It was Guy Fawkes Day; and as he stepped off the boat into the land of his dreams, it must have seemed to him like a nightmare. Everywhere in the streets were great signs bearing the words, "NO POPERY!" Everywhere in his path the effigy of the Pope was being consigned to roaring bonfires amid the shrieking of fifes, the beating of drums, and the exulting shouts of the dearly beloved English.

Yet, from the scenes he witnessed on Guy Fawkes Day, Dominic might have learned at least two lessons. The bonfires pictured how fiercely the flames of hatred burned against the Church in England. And the drear coldness of the November afternoon was a portent of the reception he was to receive from most of the English Catholics.

Bishop Wiseman and Father Spencer, of course, welcomed him warmly at Oscott College. But, apart from these, his reception was cold. That coldness must have been a shock to poor Dominic, but it is quite understandable to us. Englishmen, as a rule, are undemonstrative, anyway; and it

was but natural that even the Catholics should have resented this ungainly Italian in his religious garb and sandaled feet, sputtering his broken English and burning to convert England all at once. After all, they must have thought, what did he know about their country? What did he understand about their centuries in the catacombs and how they had had to fight to win a few privileges for themselves? Did he want to spoil everything now, with his imprudent zeal?

What chilled Dominic even more than the coldness toward him personally, however, was the lack of enthusiasm for his cause among the Catholic professors at Oscott. As someone has said, the English Catholics had not yet learned to walk upon the emancipated legs they had received only a few years before. The rust of ostracism, social and political, had eaten into their souls during the centuries of persecution in Britain, and they could hardly believe that they were free, much less try to win other Englishmen over to the Church.

But what forced Dominic to retreat back to Belgium, after a month, was the simple fact that the priest living in the house offered to him by Bishop Wiseman would not get out. Dominic had said that he would be willing to live in a cave, if he might come to England, but there wasn't even a cave for him just now. So back to Belgium he went with a promise that he would be invited soon again. Beside the reception given him by Wiseman and Spencer, there was a letter from Phillips to cheer him. It read:

I have heard this moment that you are at Oscott. What delightful news. At length an apostle, a man of God, is come into England. We have seen at last accomplished the prophecies of your venerable founder, Father Paul of the Cross, regarding the foundation of your Institute in England. We see at length the effect of so many prayers offered to God by your Institute for the conversion of this kingdom. . . .

But Dominic knew that the prophecy of Paul of the Cross would not be fulfilled until he had a foundation in Britain. So he watched across the channel more closely than ever, like a hound that has sighted his quarry. Particularly he was watching the leaders of the Oxford Movement who had now reached the crossroads with the publication of Newman's Tract 90. Herein Newman strove to prove that the Thirty-nine Articles of the Established Church were not necessarily opposed to the Decrees of the Council of Trent. The Anglican Church was up in arms. Newman resigned his living at Oxford, and retired to Littlemore. Another of the English group, John Dalgairns, wrote an article about Anglican Church Parties for the *Univers*. That was the opportunity for which Dominic had been waiting. He had vanquished De Lamennais. Now he was to try to vanquish Newman.

Dominic's letter to the Gentlemen at Oxford was a masterpiece. Written in elegant Latin, in the words of Dom Bede Camm, O.S.B. it "answered the difficulties and objections of Anglicans in the most masterly way." It proved that Newman's attempts to reconcile the tenets of Anglicanism and Catholicism were "a snare in the path to Rome." Newman remarked that the author of the letter was "a sharp, clever man." And Dalgairns began a controversy with Dominic that was to bring him to Littlemore and to Newman.

THE PROMISED LAND

Most important just now, however, was the final call from Bishop Wiseman to come to England and settle at last in a Passionist foundation there. The General commissioned Dominic to be Superior of both the Belgian and English Provinces. Again he set off across the Channel, with one companion, an Irish Passionist named Father Amadeus. This time he was really to fulfill the prophecy of Paul of the Cross. He arrived in Oscott on October 7, 1841.

As Father Pius Devine, C.P. has written:

Dominic comes to a new country, whose language he cannot well speak, whose customs he is ignorant of, amongst a people who despise the garb he wears as deeply as they detest the religion he professes. . . . He has no money, and few friends. . . . If the busy world around him had known of this ungainly monk in his rude sackcloth and sandals, who was intent upon turning them away from heresy, they verily would have laughed him to scorn.

In Belgium he had said that he expected all kinds of sufferings. "I have not come here to enjoy myself," he wrote, "or to receive applause. Contradictions, poverty, and calumny do not terrify us. For twenty-six years I have been preparing for this. And I hope we shall go on to England, where the cross will be heavier than ever." It was to become far heavier than he could imagine. And his suffering began at once with what was always hardest for his impetuous soul to bear—waiting. For almost five months he had to wait at Oscott College because of delay in Rome which threatened to bring to a quick and inglorious end the entire project. Rome seemed to be against him. The English professors at Oxford rebuffed him. But finally in February he entered his own house at Aston. He celebrated his first public Mass on a Sunday morning. When he tried to say the prayers in English after Mass, his congregation began to snicker and then to howl at his broken speech. Poor Dominic, in tears, had to be helped into the sacristy.

Yet from the start there was something about this physically unattractive Italian monk that influenced people in spite of themselves. Newman himself once said that he was moved to the depths of his soul, every time he saw Dominic. Thus, slowly but surely, the poor stuttering foreigner began to win the hearts of his little congregation. In March he dared to give a mission—in English. It was the beginning of all the modern parish missions in England. On Good

Friday he received his first convert into the Church. By Advent he was ready to work in the town of Stone, three miles away. Here he hired a room in an inn, to say Mass there for the first time since Reformation days. And in this village, for almost two years, he was to walk the Way of the Cross with his Divine Master.

To understand what Dominic had to face in Stone, we must know something of the deplorable condition of the Catholic Church in England at this time. From the days of Elizabeth until the Emancipation Act of 1829, during more than two centuries, Catholics had been subjected to cruel persecution. And while the Emancipation Act stopped the open oppression of Catholics, it meant only that they would be tolerated if they did not make too much show of their religion. The days of the rack in London Tower, the hanging and quartering on Tyburn Hill, and the hunting down of priests had indeed passed. But men were still living who could remember the Gordon Riots, when British mobs had risked burning down the city of London to show their hatred for Catholics, and the King's militia alone had been able to halt the butchery of Catholic Englishmen.

When Dominic came to England, the fewness of priests, the wretchedness of religious edifices, and the timidity of Catholics gave ample indications of the sad effects of relentless persecution and intolerant bigotry towards the Catholics. Newman in the Second Spring described English Catholics as a:

"gens lucifuga, a people who shunned the light of day . . . found in corners, and alleys, and cellars, and the housetops, or in the recesses of the country; cut off from the populous world around them, and dimly seen, as if through a mist or in twilight, as ghosts flitting to and fro."

Especially the old spirit of hatred towards the monk and friar was still rampant. For three centuries the religious

habit had not been seen publicly in all the realm of England. It was banned by law. Members of Religious Orders were scattered, using the name and dress of seculars. They were forbidden to receive new members, under pain of banishment.

Truly the great British windmills of religious bigotry had well-nigh ground the Catholic Church in England into powder. Little did anyone know that our modern Don Quixote was to put an end to much of their clumsy wheeling. He was simply to pierce them with his lance, made in the form of a Cross.

TRAGEDY

We cannot lay too much importance on what we are to speak of now. The conflict we are to note took place in the quiet English village of Stone between a single Italian monk and some hundreds or possibly thousands of English people. But the results of that struggle were so far-reaching as to be incalculable.

On the one hand, Dominic championed the right of Catholics, not merely to practise their religion, but to flaunt it openly and unafraid, to brandish it, to blazon it for all the world to see. On the other hand, a multitude representing all the forces of bigotry in England did their best to crush him.

During three centuries, I repeat, the religious habit had not been seen publicly in all Britain. It was proscribed by law. Dominic was the first religious in three hundred years to dare to appear in habit and sandaled feet upon the streets and roadways of that kingdom. By this action he faced banishment. Indeed he braved martyrdom. The action demanded blazing courage. Its continuance called for sheer heroism.

However dimly they realized the full import of Dominic's daring, Catholics and Protestants alike must have sensed

the issues involved. They must have been somehow aware that if this barefoot missionary were to retreat or fail in his bold enterprise, the open practice of Catholicism in England would receive a setback; if he were to triumph, alone against the forces of prejudice, his bravery and his victory must shame the English Catholics into a courage like unto his own.

Thus Dominic shouted a direct challenge to British bigotry on that first morning when he walked in his religious habit and sandals into the village of Stone, entrenched in centuries of religious hatred of the Church. It was a call to battle. And the bigots rose immediately to arms. As eyewitnesses said later, all hell seemed to be let loose against him.

The walk from Aston to Stone was three miles. On the first morning Dominic met few people until he came to the outskirts of Stone. Those few were too dumbfounded to do more than stare at him. But as he neared the village, people began to follow him. There were angry mutterings, then a deepening clamor of many voices. Windows were thrown open along the streets. Children left their play to join their elders. Some of the wastrels of the town began to shout insults. One threw a stone. The temper of the crowd rose with its numbers. When Dominic entered the inn, where he had hired a room in which to say Mass, the mob waited outside for him. It grew larger with every passing minute. Messengers were dispatched to bring the most bigoted from their homes and offices. When the monk reappeared, he was greeted with a sullen roar. Curses and insults grew louder, ribald, unrepeatable. Dominic walked slowly through the crowd, hat in hand, and in perfect calm, bowing to all, and with a kind word for all. But as he walked along, stones began to rain upon him. People spat at him. Some of the more daring scooped mud and filth from the roadway, and flung them in his face. Even the

children joined in the mad onslaught. All the way to the outskirts of the town the surging rout followed him. When they left him at last, his habit was defiled, his face bloody, his ears ringing with threats of death, should he return.

No doubt the mob thought that the stout little Italian monk would never come back. But they did not know their man, nor how for twenty-six years he had been preparing himself for martyrdom. Not only did he return in a few days, but three times each week for two years he walked from Aston to Stone and back again in his religious habit and sandals. After a few visits, the mobs of the village did not wait for him. They came outside to meet him. As he appeared in the distance, they set up a chant of "Here comes Father Demonio! Here comes the Demon!" They had heaps of stones waiting for him. In time his face was scarred from their battering. Once a huge beam that might have killed him missed his head by inches. The warfare became diabolical. Calumnies were added to the insults and blows. And more than once men lay in wait for him in the dark to kill him as he walked back to Aston. There was no miraculous dog, like the famous Grigio of Don Bosco, to protect his life. But although there was only one road back to Aston, and though cut-throats waited for him somehow Dominic always passed by without their seeing him.

Most of the Catholics were almost as bitter as the Protestants against "the mad foreigner." They feared that his "wild imprudence" might react upon themselves. His Passionist companion stayed at home. Dominic was alone, and at the lowest ebb of his gallant spirits. He writes:

"My God, for what distress and sorrow You have reserved me. I spent so many years before coming to this island, preparing myself at all times for suffering. But I find I am not half-well-enough prepared for the dire reality. It seems to me that if I had ever foreseen all that awaited me, I should never have had the courage to step on board ship. Last Sunday I broke down, and

wept bitterly. I can do no more. The Cross is too heavy. My God, if You intend to increase it, You must increase my strength, too."

Martyrdom would have been a relief to him at any time during those two years when he walked the Way of the Cross from Aston to Stone. . . . And here was the beloved England for which his heart had burned, and about which he could never speak during twenty-six years except in the broken accents of a lover.

SECOND SPRING

Yet never did he ask for relief, nor utter a word of complaint to his Superiors. And slowly the stark courage and holiness of the man began to break down his enemies. After many months, the children who had stoned him began to cling to his religious cloak. Some of the more fair-minded of his enemies began to be ashamed of their violent cruelty. More important, the Catholics were little by little aroused from their apathy. The story of Dominic's sufferings and of his sanctity spread through England. More and more he was in demand for missions and retreats. Like the poor old toothless Curé of Ars, he could scarcely be understood with his broken English. But there was the same sort of supernatural effects to his preaching. People rose early, walked far, and waited long in cold and bad weather to hear him and to go to confession. Prejudices were broken down; Catholics walked with new confidence. In April of 1843, after only a year at Aston, Dominic could count seventy-five converts. Innumerable Catholics had returned to their religious duties.

Next year the church at Aston was opened for public worship. At Stone a church was built that served during weekdays as a Catholic school. Three priests and some postulants now lived with Dominic at Aston Hall, despite the threat of banishment against religious who accepted new members.

The regular monastic life of the Passionists was carried out in full. The number of converts was well into the hundreds.

It was the first budding of the Second Spring. Next year was to see its flowering.

Ever since his Belgian correspondence with Dalgairns, Dominic had kept in close touch with the leaders of the Oxford Movement, those men who with Newman as their head, were discovering their position in the Anglican Church intolerable. He had written to them, prayed for them, publicly praised them, visited with them. "These Oxford men," he wrote, "work with the spirit of martyrs. Let us pray for them. The finger of God seems to be there in a wonderful manner." Dalgairns wrote to him for hairshirts and disciplines, and he remarked, "their practices of penances are extraordinary; their life is much more severe than that usually led by religious." In June of 1844 we find Dominic at Littlemore with Newman and the devoted band he had gathered around him. Newman took Dominic to Littlemore Church, and they prayed together. At this meeting Newman must have told the Passionist something that stirred his heart, for we find the General writing to him, "What consolation I feel at your news about the declaration of the Head of Oxford University. The results ought to be good. May the Lord give His grace to the others." Dominic himself wrote, "Only a little more grace is needed."

We may recall it was while praying before the Blessed Sacrament at Castellazzo that Paul of the Cross began to reflect on those men who deny the Real Presence of Our Lord in the Eucharist. England especially had come to his mind, England where for centuries the Real Presence had been denied, and where the Sacrifice of the Mass had been declared an idolatrous superstition. For this country Paul and his sons had never ceased praying. Now Dominic was to have a ceremony which would be a significant prelude to

the conversions of the Oxford leaders. They wished, above all, to restore belief in the Eucharist before which Paul had been inspired to pray for them, that Sacrament which Newman was to speak of later as "prompted by our Lord's love, devised by His wisdom, and realized by His omnipotence."

Dominic's ceremony was—a public, outdoor procession in honor of the Blessed Sacrament. He himself carried the monstranced Host. It was an event unparalleled since pre-Reformation days. Two thousand spectators, Protestant and Catholic, witnessed the ceremony. All bore witness to the fact that while the rain fell in torrents, it did not fall on the property through which Dominic led the procession. Later he remarked drily that the Protestants had said, "The devil is in these Papists."

Here again we see Dominic defying precedent and common procedure. Again we see him calling to Catholic England to put down its timidity and show forth once more the spirit of Augustine and Thomas of Canterbury, of Fisher and Sir Thomas More. And this public honor shown to Our Lord in the Eucharist, after centuries of neglect and contempt, appeared to be the immediate prelude to the full flowering of the Second Spring in England. Soon afterward, Dominic received Dalgairns into the Church. Newman's closest friend, St. John, was received at Stonyhurst. Then came the fateful October 8, 1845, the invitation to Littlemore, the wild ride on the stage-coach through the storm, and the unforgettable tableau of Newman on his knees to the Italian monk, begging him to hear his confession and accept him into the Church. On the following morning Newman, Bowles, and Stanton made their profession of Faith to Dominic together.

The news of Newman's conversion at once reechoed all over the world. Masses of thanksgiving and Te Deums were offered up throughout Christendom. Dominic wrote,

"All that I have suffered since I left Italy has been well compensated by this event, and I hope the effects of such a conversion may be great."

Who can calculate how great were the effects of Newman's conversion? The historian Lecky called it "an event unparalleled in magnitude since that which had taken place under the Tudors." In his *The Church and the Nineteenth Century*, Father Raymond Corrigan, S.J. writes:

What the Oxford Movement has meant for the Church is beyond computation. It brought to her a trained army of scholars and writers at a time when she was silent and helpless in England against calumny and contempt. Only those who can accurately gauge the impact of Catholic thought on the English world of letters and the importance of the English language around the globe are fitted to pronounce on the results of the Oxford Movement. The whole Catholic body are better able to meet the modern world in a spirit of calm and unabashed confidence because they know and all the world knows that the Church can still appeal to an elite among the intellectual classes.

Many years after Newman's reception into the Church, someone remarked that since that time every intellectual conversion in the English-speaking world might in some way be traced to his influence. The list of those who followed him would require a special book. But even in our own day we can remark how the intellectuals continue to be drawn into the Church—Chesterton, Dawson, Benson, Lunn, Hollis, Gill, Knox, Martindale, Maturin, Rosalind Murray, Noyes, Lord Alfred Douglas, etc. And in America there have been multitudes like Brownson, the Stoddards, Bishop Kinsman, Isaac Hecker, Rose Hawthorne, Delaney, Tabb, Joyce Kilmer, Heywood Broun, Dorothy Day, Bishop Curtis, Michael Williams, and Fidelis Kent Stone.

Of course it might be argued that any priest could have received Newman into the Church. But we have tried to

show that Dominic was precisely the one who should have had that happiness. This tremendous conversion rightly belonged to Paul of the Cross, who had sowed the first seeds of the Second Spring in Castellazzo; to the Passionists who had been praying for England during more than a century; to Dominic, whose life for more than thirty years had been a complete holocaust for his beloved England; to this apostle who had roused the English Church to new life, whose blood had flowed for it in the streets of Stone. Dom Bede Camm, O.S.B. remarks:

If a conversion is chiefly and necessarily the work of God's grace in answer to the intercession of Catholics, shall we be wrong if we attribute to Father Dominic a far greater share in this unique conversion than appears or can appear on the surface?

When we go beneath the surface and see the story which lies behind that conversion, we know that in the designs of God Dominic's share in it was immense and inevitable.

Until the end of his life Dominic kept up a correspondence by letter and mutual visits with Newman, whom he called "one of the humblest and most lovable of men." The converts at Littlemore lived for a while according to a simple rule of life arranged for them by the Passionist monk. Later he defended them publicly against calumnious attack. Newman called Dominic his father in God, and kept a picture of him in his bedroom, with a light always burning before it. He probably spent Dominic's last Christmas with him at Aston, after having brought to him some books from the General in Rome. Newman frequently visited with the Passionists there, offered a Mass of thanksgiving at the altar of Paul of the Cross, and wished to be one of his patrons at his canonization. When Dominic's "Cause" for canonization was introduced, Newman said to Cardinal Parrocchi:

I thank you for the interest you manifest in a "cause" which to me is most dear, as the Passionist Fathers well

know. Father Dominic was a marvelous missionary and preacher, filled with zeal. He had a great part in my own conversion, and in that of others. His very look had about it something holy. When his form came within sight, I was moved to the depths in the strangest way. The gaiety and affability of his manner in the midst of all his sanctity was a holy sermon. No wonder, then, that I became his convert and his penitent. His sudden death filled me with grief. I hoped and still hope that Rome will crown him with the aureole of the saints.

A NOBLE AND A GRENADIER

October, the month of Mary's Rosary, to which Dominic had been devoted since boyhood, was always to be a great month for him, from the time of his vision in Italy. In October, just one year after his reception into the Church, Newman was moved to write to a friend one of the most striking things he ever said about Dominic's Congregation. It was occasioned by a remarkable happening. He wrote from Rome:

"What do you think of Mr. Spencer having joined the Passionists? I am glad, for Father Dominic's sake. We went to their house with Cardinal Acton—suppose we all become Passionists!"

We have already seen in Lord Shrewsbury's letter how Father Glover had declared that "no Englishman would ever become a Passionist." God's answer to that statement was made almost melodramatically. The first Englishman to demolish Father Glover's prediction was a son of the former First Lord of the English Admiralty, the Hon. George Spencer. A member of that great Spencer family from which Winston Spencer Churchill has come, he was in later life a welcome visitor at Buckingham Palace even in his religious habit and sandals.

The coming of Father Spencer to the Passionists is only another proof that Paul of the Cross was at the bottom of the Second Spring in England. Spencer, as an Anglican

minister, had been drawn into the Church by reading a book of St. John Chrysostom concerning the Eucharist. He had been amazed to learn that Chrysostom had believed in the "Real Presence." After his ordination in Rome, he had become a great friend of the Passionists. He had drawn up the petition that invited them to England. And he had not only enlisted himself in their crusade of prayer for the conversion of his country, but he had for years traveled all over the Continent and the British Isles, building up that crusade to become a veritable avalanche of petitions for England. As the Archbishop of Liverpool said:

Dominic and Spencer sounded the trumpet which announced the birth of a new and better day for Catholics; they were the apostles and first laborers in the glorious work of the reconversion of England to the Catholic Faith.

It was inevitable in the designs of God that Father Spencer should become a son of St. Paul of the Cross, that he should make his vows with his hands in those of Dominic, and receive from him as a legacy the English Passionist Province. He died in 1864, after a saintly and distinguished career. And as he was so closely united with Dominic in life, it is appropriate that they lie together in death at St. Ann's in Sutton—Ignatius Spencer, scion of British aristocracy, and Dominic Barberi, child of a peasant home in Italy.

If Lord Shrewsbury and other Englishmen were astonished when Father Spencer became a Passionist, they must have been dumbfounded when the nephew of the Duke of Wellington followed him. The young and dashing Captain Pakenham of the Grenadier Guards was received into the Church by Bishop Wiseman in 1850. A year later, he rode up to the gates of the Passionist Novitiate at Broadway, Worcestershire, dismounted, gave his horse to a groom, and went inside to clothe himself in a facsimile of Dominic's coarse black habit and sandals. The Iron Duke said to him

in his monastic cell, "You have been a good soldier. Be a good monk." So good a monk did he become that he died in the odor of sanctity as the young rector of the Passionist Monastery of Mt. Argus in Dublin. Thirty-seven years after his death, his body was found to be altogether incorrupt.

Do you wonder why I say that there is no drama like the lives of the saints?

LAST DAYS

Strangely enough, it was after the reception of Newman into the Church that Dominic seemed to realize clearly that the time for the conversion of the English masses had not yet come. He wrote:

God can do what He wills. But, humanly speaking, I see no prospect of the total conversion of England. There are too many passions, too many prejudices, too much egoism, too much indifference.

All this, however, should not be too surprising when we remember how for centuries the cry of "No Popery" had been dinned into the ears of the English until it had become almost synonymous with, "St. George for England!" But it is difficult to understand how so reasonable a people as the English can be so unreasonable with regard to the Catholic Church. They shout, "No Popery!" Yet it was the Pope who sent them Augustine. Their great cathedrals were built by their Catholic ancestors; their greatest kings and all their saints have been Catholics. And they still style their Ruler "Defender of the Faith," though that title was given by the Pope to Henry VIII for his defense of the ancient Catholic religion.

Of course Dominic added to his remarks about the hopelessness of converting the English masses, "We must not, however, lose courage." Nor did he ever lose his own. He persisted in doing most startling things in England until his death. At one time we see him preaching in habit and

sandals in the streets of London, and, crucifix in hand, urging astounded Englishmen to come to his mission. At another time we read how he "preached in a hay-loft to five hundred Protestants." Even in Ireland he upset all precedent by converting fifteen Protestants during a mission in Dublin. This, for Ireland, was simply a miracle.

The famine of 1846 drove multitudes of starving Irish to England, and fever and plague followed hard on their overcrowding and starvation. Dominic and Spencer and their companions worked heroically amid the poor sufferers. Spencer was struck down and almost died. Dominic had to fight on alone. And now he could not say, as he had said during the cholera epidemic in Ceprano, "Death cannot come near me. I must die in England." For he was at last in England. And death did come near him. The fever felled him at last. Its effects stayed with him until the end.

Dominic lived in England only eight years. During that time he gave more than a hundred memorable missions and retreats. But mostly he was busy with his duties as head of both the English and Belgian Passionist Provinces. He had to lead the way in keeping up the monastic observance. He had to take care of the houses under his jurisdiction, and to be continually solicitous for new monasteries, churches, and schools. In 1847 his old friend, Bishop Wiseman, became Bishop of London, and immediately offered him a house in the suburbs. In 1848, rejoicing that he now had twenty professed religious, he began another foundation at Sutton in Lancashire. In the summer of 1849 he made a visitation in Belgium. He returned to Aston on August 26th. That night he planned to go to Woodchester on the following day. It was to be the last day of his life.

TRIUMPH OF FAILURE

Dominic started out on the morning of August 27th with a companion, Father Lewis. On the way to the train he

remarked simply that the end of his life was near. But he had been saying the same thing for several months, and Father Lewis paid no special heed to it.

Now, however, the onslaught of death, cheated so often, was to come suddenly and savagely. The train had just passed Reading when Dominic was seized with a violent heart attack. The train stopped at Pangbourne, and a doctor helped Father Lewis lift the dying man out of the carriage. Because of the cholera then raging in London, nobody would give him shelter. And so he lay on the bare ground of the railway station, in terrible agony.

What were Dominic's thoughts as he lay there on the railway platform, with his crucifix pressed to his lips? Was he satisfied with his life, now that he knew it was drawing to a swift ending?

We behold the glory of the saints after their deaths in the miracles that God works in their names, in the results that have followed from their labors and their sufferings. But the saints, for the most part, look upon themselves as failures. Gabriel of the Sorrowful Virgin, dying after years of preparation for a missionary career, without even becoming a priest, sick during almost all his religious life, must have thought himself a disappointment and a burden to his Congregation. He knew nothing of the glory he was to bring to that Congregation after his death. Peter Chantal, sitting on the floor of his little hut in Futuna, with his life-blood flowing from the spear wound made by a murderous savage, must have esteemed his life a fiasco. He had converted not a single soul on the island which he had wanted to bring to Christ. How could he have seen, as we do, the whole island brought to Our Lord because of his martyrdom? And Dominic, dying on the floor of a railroad station in England—what had he accomplished after thirty years of preparing for his mission, after eight years in England, after all his prayers and labors and sufferings? He had wished

to convert all England. Actually he was leaving behind him some hundreds of converts, a few poor religious houses, a handful of religious.

We can see the entire pathway of Dominic's life lighted up for us now. We can see the highlights of that life, and there is a sort of glow about our hero. But Dominic always saw himself as he really was, crippled with sickness, half-blind, ungainly, almost ugly. He saw himself rebuffed and opposed by his own. He saw himself laughed at, mocked, spit upon, even stoned in the roadways of the country he had loved so dearly.

How could he foresee all the good that was to follow from his labors, or the spread of his Passionist Province through the British Isles, and even to Australia?

Yes, the story of Dominic, like the story of all the saints, is high drama, but we must never forget that by far the greater part of it for him was dark and bitter tragedy.

And yet, as with all the saints, he must have been in uttermost peace of soul as he lay dying on the ground at Pangbourne. He had done the best he could. God would take care of the rest, as He had always done. As Father Urban Young, C.P. writes so well:

It was Dominic's final Gethsemani, and he knew it. This was the end. It had been a long way, weary and thorn-strewn, from the sun-steeped slopes of Italy to the mists and fogs of England, and this deathbed at a lonely wayside station. But not for worlds would he have retraced a step of it. For was it not all for England—dear England—that he had paced every foot of the way? That she might return to the faith of her fathers he had grudged no sacrifice. For her he had studied and toiled and endured. In that lifelong martyrdom for England, hunger, thirst, cold, heat, toils, persecutions, and contempt had been his lot, crowned now in lonely death by a very torment of pain and dereliction supreme. But little did he reckon of it. His death, like his life, would be for England.

Father Lewis bent down and gave the dying man his last absolution. He had already, that morning, given himself his own Viaticum. He was carried into the train that now came into the station, bound for Reading. At Reading he was taken to a railway tavern. His agony lasted five hours. During it he asked Father Lewis to write immediately to Father Spencer and tell him to take his place until Father General would settle the matter. The doctor held hopes of recovery, but Dominic knew better. "In your charity," he said to Father Lewis, "do not leave me." Suddenly his agony was terrible to behold. It was the last anguish, the last struggle, the supreme sacrifice. Dominic's head fell back in death. It was three o'clock in the afternoon, the hour of His Master's triumph over death on Calvary.

Three days later, Dominic's Requiem was held at Stone. And now along the way that had once been his Via Dolorosa he was borne slowly back to Aston. A few short years before, he had walked these same streets day after, day overwhelmed with insults, stoned and beaten, his poor face covered with his blood and the filth of the streets. Now those who had once mocked and stoned him came out in their thousands to do him reverence. We read:

Never before or since, has a Passionist gone to his rest in such a setting for the final scene. The mourning thousands filled the streets, the doors, the windows, the very roofs, on that sad, yet glorious day. Slowly the procession moved, swaying, in the surging crowds who wept their last goodbye as the coffin was borne through the familiar streets where Dominic had walked and toiled and suffered. . . . And outside the town, the sorrow-stricken multitude still streamed onward to witness his homecoming to Aston and the retreat he had loved so well.

Almost forty years later, Dominic's body was reinterred at St. Ann's in Sutton. It was found to be still incorrupt.

AFTERWORD

Dominic of the Mother of God, Passionist, needs no eulogy from us. His life is his eulogy. Pages might be filled to prove that he practiced all the virtues to a heroic degree. In a pamphlet such as this there is not room enough. Is it even necessary? We could, for example, show Dominic's humility, by telling how he shrank from the honors of the episcopacy that were pressed upon him more than once in Italy. We might speak of his poverty, how, characteristically, on one long trip from England to Belgium, he spent over and above his third-class railway fare two pence for a pork pie, and a penny for a morsel of bread, washing down the repast with a draft of water from a roadside pump. We could talk of his strict mortification, and his love for prayer, which was continual with him; of his zeal for the religious observance, which made him rise for midnight Matins in England when he had only two laymen to chant with him. We could write of his faith and hope and charity, of his fortitude, and his spirit of obedience. But we have seen all these virtues displayed throughout his life. The two resolutions he had made as a young man, always to do the best he could and leave the rest to God, and never to waste a minute in God's service, sum up his life.

We might, however, add a few words about a trait of the saints that people often overlook—their sense of humor. The wisdom of the saints is foolishness to the world, and consequently their humor seems to it to be gloom. But just as there is a sorrow too deep for tears, there is a humor too deep for laughter. The chuckle, so to speak, lies deep within the soul. Thus it is with the humor of the saints, a cheeriness that seems to increase as difficulties multiply, one that is illustrated by the remark of the old Irish lady, "My rheumatism is much worse today—thanks be to God."

Damien of Molokai as a young student had over his desk a sign which read, "Prayer, Silence, Recollection." His

superior advised him to add a fourth word, "Merriment." Dominic had learned that lesson. He knew, with St. Paul, how to "rejoice always in the Lord." He understood, with Blessed Juliana of Norwich, how to be, "strong and merry in the love of Jesus Crucified." On one occasion, unrecognized, he was kept waiting in the anteroom of a convent. The Mother Superior asked him if he had been waiting long. "Only a few hours," said he, drily. Hungry after a long journey, one of the Sisters gave him some bread and milk. It disappeared rapidly. "Maybe you'd like an egg, Father," she said. "Maybe," he said, "I'd like a dozen. But three or four will do, I think." Once the religious were buying milk from some neighbors, and it appeared to be growing weaker each day. Finally Dominic said gently to the little girl who brought it, "Will you please ask your good mother to put a little more milk with the water tomorrow?" As Newman said, there was an affability and a gayety in Dominic's manner that was a holy sermon in itself. During the terrible days at Stone he did cry out in agony of soul, but so did his Master cry out in His dereliction on Calvary.

Faults Dominic undoubtedly had—a certain stubbornness, as when he insisted on wearing sandals in public, even though the authorities in Rome advised him to wear shoes. But here he had the backing of Bishop Wiseman, and he himself had learned by experience that without the sandals he did not have the same influence on the missions. And what would he have done without that stubbornness through all his years of trial? Anger could flare up suddenly, too, as on the day he saw a picture of himself displayed in the parlor of one of his monasteries in England. Ordinarily it was directed only against those who publicly and maliciously attacked the Faith. But these incidents only prove what a struggle it cost him to be his usual self, gentle and mild and serene. And, after all, who ever expects even a saint

to be without some human faults? How could we ever hope to imitate them at all?

Was Dominic's life a failure? It was, in the sense that the lives of the saints appear very often as failures, because their Master's seemed so on Calvary. They are, rather, triumphs of failure. The seed must die before the harvest appears. What was Dominic's harvest? It can be measured only by what the Second Spring meant to the Church in England and all over the world. And that measuring is beyond our powers.

"That little band of converts at Littlemore!" writes Dom Bede Camm. "Was not that a harvest for which a man might well have spent a lifetime of prayer and penance? And was it mere chance that it fell to his hand to gather in these souls and herald thus the birthday of the Second Spring?"

What of all those who came under Dominic's influence in Italy and Belgium? What of the hundreds, possibly thousands of converts in England? What of the tens of thousands of reawakened English Catholics?

When Dominic came to England, as we have seen, Catholics were almost afraid to move. Religious Orders were in the catacombs. His daring to appear on the public roadways of Britain in the religious habit and sandals, unseen and forbidden during three hundred years; his fortitude during years of public stonings and beatings; his fiery preaching, even in the English thoroughfares; his public processions of the Blessed Sacrament, hitherto unheard of for centuries in England; all sounded a trumpet that roused the Catholic English Church from its apathy and cowardice. The first Provincial Synod of Westminster in 1852, where Newman preached THE SECOND SPRING, was made possible only by the progress of the English Church during the eight years that Dominic worked in England. That progress was due, in great measure, to him.

Since his day the English population has doubled. But the Catholics in England have trebled in numbers. Magnificent Catholic churches, monasteries, schools, and religious institutions of every kind cover the land. Conversions continue apace. After the first World War, for instance, until 1930, it was estimated that there were 12,000 conversions each year, mostly of mature and earnest men and women. And best of all, the centuries-old hatred and stigmatizing of Catholics as un-English, which Dominic knew, has largely disappeared.

Of his Congregation there are now sixteen houses in England and Ireland and Scotland; a house in Paris stemming from the English Province; and four foundations in Australia. Before the war English Passionists were also working in Tanganyika, Africa.

Thus Dominic's harvest still cannot be estimated, because it will continue to grow until that last day when God alone will be able to estimate its riches. For the harvest of the saints never dies in this world. It has its roots and its flowering in that Mystical Body of Him Who walks the roadways of the world until the end of time.

Was Dominic a saint? Those who knew him thought he was, from Leo XIII and Cardinal Newman to his fellow religious and the layfolk for whom he spent himself so utterly. There has been well-attested evidence that he had supernatural gifts—prophecy, the reading of hearts, even bilocation. There is strong proof of miracles worked through his intercession.

But only the Church can decide whether he is worthy of canonization, only the Holy Spirit Who speaks through the visible head of the Mystical Body on matters such as this. Cardinal Bourne, however, in speaking of those who have labored for the conversion of England during the last three centuries, has well written:

In the front rank among them all stands Dominic

Barberi, worthy indeed of our private prayer and veneration, pending the hour when the Church may authoritatively set him publicly among her saints.

Dominic alone, of all connected with England's Second Spring, has received the public stamp of the Church's approval with the title of Venerable. And as the Archbishop of Westminster has said, "It would be a crowning triumph to the celebrations to mark the centenary of Cardinal Newman's reception into the Church if the Holy See saw fit to raise to the altar the priest who received him into the Church."

Surely Cardinal Newman in heaven must be hoping, even more than he did on earth, that the Church will crown his "Father in God" with the "aureole of the saints." It would add new color and beauty to all the flowering of THE SECOND SPRING.

Prayer for the Beatification of Father Dominic

O ALMIGHTY and merciful God, Who findest Thy delight in the children of men, and art wonderful in Thy saints, glorify Thy Servant Dominic of the Mother of God. Grant that for Thy greater glory his Beatification may soon be proclaimed by the Church, so that we may invoke him as our father, model, and patron, always honoring Thee, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, to Whom be honor, praise, and glory forever. *Amen.*



Saint Paul of the Cross

Founder of the Passionists

